

WAIMR'S VISION

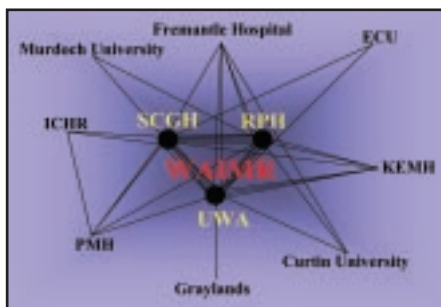
The Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR) was established in March 1998. The founding partners were The University of Western Australia (UWA) and the research foundations at Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital (SCGH). Wesfarmers Limited was the founding sponsor and supported WAIMR with a \$5 million grant over 5 years. In addition, UWA committed \$10m over 20 years and the State Government \$8m over 4 years.

The vision of WAIMR was to create a multi-site Institute which would enhance the intellectual environment in WA, and to become an international leader in biomedical research that improved health care in Western Australia.

THE WAIMR AWARDS EVENING

In March WAIMR held an Awards evening to inform medical researchers around Perth about the outcome of their grant applications to WAIMR. These research Awards are one of the steps WAIMR has taken towards promoting medical research in WA. Applications for funding were thoroughly assessed by the Senior Faculty of WAIMR and by external reviewers on the basis of:

1. New collaborations
2. Scientific excellence
3. Recruitment of new research personnel
4. The potential for commercialisation



Twenty-nine grants were awarded, establishing new collaborations between researchers at UWA, RPH, SCGH, King Edward Memorial Hospital, Princess Margaret

Hospital, Hollywood Hospital and Curtin University. A total of \$1.7m was allocated for these research endeavours in the first year, with a further \$2.3m over the following two years, making a total investment of \$4m over three years. The vast majority of the funds will go into new appointments – through these grants 15 positions have been created for Postdoctoral Fellows, Biostatisticians and Bioengineers, as well as 8 Research Assistant positions and 8 PhD scholarships.



WAIMR is delighted to contribute to increasing the cohesion between researchers in WA and to fostering the careers of outstanding, young investigators. The creation of these new jobs is an investment in the "intellectual capital" of the State, and is in line with the recommendations of the Premier's Science Council. We are extremely optimistic that our strategy will "pump prime" adult medical research in this State, which will lead to improved clinical outcomes and increased competitiveness for national and international research funding.



FUNDS ATTRACTED BY WAIMR RESEARCHERS

In 2002, the Intramural researchers of WAIMR (ie researchers working specifically within WAIMR premises) successfully obtained grants totalling \$2.8m from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the WA Medical and Health Research Infrastructure Council and other non-government granting bodies. This was a \$1m increase from 2001 and brings the total of funds raised by these WAIMR researchers to nearly \$6m over the past 3 years.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

WAIMR has come a long way since the last issue of the DNAge (June 2001). Following a Review and a Strategic Planning meeting, the concept of WAIMR has been soundly endorsed and new structures established.

I am particularly pleased with the recent allocation of WAIMR grants to researchers in WA. Applications for funds were rigorously evaluated by internal and external peer review and the 29 successful projects created new collaborations across many Hospital and Universities in Perth. As one researcher stated "the WAIMR funds have provided us with the opportunity to embark on collaborative projects we were unable to consider before". This goes to the very heart of WAIMR's vision ie to enhance the biomedical research environment in WA that leads to improved health outcomes. I am also delighted that the Institute has advertised for several new positions including a Professorial Fellow, Postdoctoral Fellowships, PhDs and Research Assistants. Having invested significantly in producing state-of-the-art research facilities, it is exciting to see researchers moving into WAIMR's new laboratories.

It is with much sadness that WAIMR has accepted the resignation of Dr Rex Joyner as CEO. Due to ill health, Dr Joyner was unable to continue in this role, and I wish to express my sincere appreciation of his outstanding efforts as CEO.

On behalf of everyone at WAIMR I would like to express my sincere thanks to all supporters of the Institute. We are extremely grateful for your continued support, as your ongoing backing will enable WAIMR to develop into a Centre of Excellence for medical research. Each supporter has made an investment in the future health of this State.

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR

I am pleased to announce that Professor Peter Klinken has been appointed as Director of WAIMR for the next 2 years. The appointment of Prof Klinken provides the organisation with the stability and confidence to continue with its progress of promoting research in WA.



Harry Perkins

Harry Perkins AO
Chairman

PROFESSORIAL FELLOW IN MOLECULAR GENETICS

Together with UWA, WAIMR has recently advertised for a Professorial Fellow in Molecular Genetics. This position aims to strengthen WAIMR's molecular genetic capacity and support the skills available in the Institute.

NEW RESEARCHERS MOVING INTO B BLOCK LABORATORIES

As part of WAIMR's philosophy of strategic relocations, several research teams have moved into WAIMR laboratories recently, with more on the way. These relocations are bringing together researchers with complementary expertise and creating a critical mass, which is vital for a modern research environment.

Dr Nikolajs Zeps, Project Manager for the West Australian Research Tissue Network, has moved his storage freezers into WAIMR laboratories at SCGH. These freezers will store tissues and DNA derived from patients' biopsies and act as a source of material which will benefit researchers throughout WA.

In collaboration with the Centre for Neuromuscular and Neurological Disorders, A/Prof Nigel Laing has moved some of his research team including Dr Anthony Aakkari, Mrs Kay Beckman (Research Assistant) and Ms Kendall Walker (PhD Student) into WAIMR laboratories. Associate Professor Laing has an outstanding record in molecular genetics and is an international authority on the genes responsible for several neuromuscular disorders.

THREE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL WAIMR SYMPOSIA

WAIMR held a "Protein Workshop" on October 31, 2001 at the RPH campus. It was organised by Prof Peter Klinken and 11 of Perth's experts in Protein research presented their unique technology and skills. This workshop attracted a capacity audience of 150 research scientists



and students from all of WA's University campuses and teaching Hospitals. For many attendees this was the first time they had been made aware of the expertise and equipment available in Perth.

WAIMR co-sponsored with the Raine Foundation a Symposium on "Osteolysis: molecules to clinical practice". This symposium was held on November 2, 2001 and was organized by Assoc Prof Ming Hao Zheng. The key invited speaker was Prof SL Teitelbaum from Washington University in St. Louis, USA.

A Symposium on "Falls and Exercise" was held on Friday April 19, 2002 in WAIMR, SCGH. It was organised by Prof Richard Prince and attracted a full house with an audience comprising of hospital, rehabilitation and Silver Chain nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, doctors and research scientists. The Guest Speaker was Associate Professor Stephen Lord (Principal Research Fellow at the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute in NSW).



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

WAIMR will be organising another of the highly successful workshops, this time bringing together experts in the field of Cell Biology.

WAIMR is co-sponsoring the 3rd Asia Pacific Symposium on Neural Regeneration in December which is being organised by members of WAIMR's Neurotrauma Research Program.

How to find out more information..

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH INC

Perth Campus

Level 5 & 6 MRF Building, Rear 50 Murray Street, Perth WA 6000
Tel: +61 8 9224 0333 Fax: +61 8 9224 0322

Nedlands Campus

Ground Floor, B Block, Hospital Avenue, Nedlands WA 6009
Tel: +61 8 9346 3838 Fax: +61 8 9346 1818

Website: www.waimr.uwa.edu.au